

**NEWS from the North Dakota Department of Human Services
600 E. Boulevard Ave., Bismarck ND 58505**

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Help available for SNAP clients in McKenzie County who lost food due to power outages from the severe storm

BISMARCK, N.D. – McKenzie County residents who receive Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) benefits and lost food purchased with benefits due to the power outages caused by this morning's severe storm have 10 calendar days to seek replacement benefits. They must report their food loss by July 20 to the McKenzie County Social Service Office during regular business hours.

“We want SNAP households to know that help is available to replace perishable food items lost due to power outages lasting more than four hours,” said Arlene Dura, assistant director of the Economic Assistance Division for the North Dakota Department of Human Services. “Households are encouraged to contact the county social service office and to get the process started as soon as possible.”

Dura said that in June 2018, 160 households in McKenzie County received SNAP benefits.

She explained that after the county social service office verifies a food loss, replacement SNAP benefits are issued to affected clients' debit cards, called EBT cards. Clients use EBT cards at participating grocery stores, farmers markets and other USDA-approved retailers to purchase food items.

The program will replace the amount of the loss, up to the amount a household received as a benefit in July. For example, if a household reports a food loss of \$100 and the household received benefits of \$100 in July, \$100 in replacement benefits would be issued once the loss is verified.

Human services officials issue replacement SNAP benefits if households have their food supplies damaged or destroyed due to storm-related power outages or other disaster situations.

People with questions can contact the local county social service office or the department at 800-755-2716 or ND Relay TTY 800-366-6888. County contact information is online at www.nd.gov/dhs/locations/countysocialserv/.

In June 2018, the federally-funded Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program served about 52,300 qualifying low-income North Dakotans. The program tends to serve mainly low-income children, working families, people with disabilities and seniors on fixed incomes.

Information about the SNAP food assistance program is available online at www.nd.gov/dhs/services/financialhelp/foodstamps.html.

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